/34 cont./

861 The reactions of the child to the punishment he receives for the different offenses considered punishable are diverse. Thus we see that during his early years, on being beaten he will scream, cry, and try to run away or endeavor to show his resentment by becoming enraged and throwing himself on the floor, where he rolls furiously, an attitude he will also assume if he cannot get his own way. On again being beaten with nettles for this act, he takes warning and only at long intervals will he have a relapse, because he is threatened by a repetition of the punishment.

861 When he is able to walk and run perfectly well, the child
858 attempts to escape punishment whenever possible by running away when he sees his mother or the person who means to punish him, or he endeavors to keep away from home in the hope that their annoyance will pass. When the beatings are very severe or very frequent or he considers them unjust, it is common for the boy to run away, going as far away as possible, in search of an uncle or relative who will offer him protection. The flight from home is more usual among boys than among girls and is more liable to occur toward the prepubertal age, because the youth feels restricted by family demands and /35/ aspires to get free of them. At this age corporal punishment and deprivation of food are punishments much less used, but criticism and verbal reproaches are the most used, and the young people react violently against these. In the cases where the scolding comes from the father, which is rare, the mother tries to pacify the boy, pointing out that he should not give such importance to the matter. But when it is she herself who reprehends him, the furious boy leaves home or stays in the house sulking and not speaking to anyone, showing his resentment and refusing to eat. When he leaves home, the mother allows a certain time to pass, during which she makes inquiries as to his whereabouts and what he has said. Then she asks an uncle, a brother, or his favorite friend to speak to him and persuade him to return. When he comes back she makes no allusion to the matter, and home life then goes on as usual.

[86 cont.]

In these magic practices we can observe the following facts: 1) The burial of the first-born infant face downward in a funeral urn prevents succeeding children dying in the same way. If he is buried face upward, the future children will all unfailingly die. The spirit of the child is, then, like that of all other dead adults, a spirit capable of doing harm, but its influence can be easily counteracted by varying the normal position of the head at the time of burial. 2) There is here the intervention of a special tree, the huruwŝ, the reason for which is at present unknown to us but which presupposes its possessing certain magic properties, as it is below this tree and no other that the body of the first-born must be buried. 3) The presence of the father or of the mother at the moment of burial would cause the death of their future children, which corroborates the above statement that the spirit of the dead, even that of the newborn child, by its death makes its influence felt in the matter of conception, as we have seen in other cases. (Cf. "Magic and Sacrifice" and "Sickness and Medicine"). 4) The mother has to undergo or relive the ceremonial of the initiation rite as this, which is also directly connected with magic, prepares a woman for her life as such. If we make an analysis we can presume or reproduce the mental processes of the Indian in this case. If the initiation rite has as its special function the preparation of the woman for her place in society and in the family and if, in spite of it, the first-born -- which implicates one of her principal functions: conception -- dies, it must mean that the said rite was not carried out in all solemnity, all and each of its [87] fundamental parts were not complied with, and it is necessary to repeat them. The mother of a dead first-born is placed then in the condition of an adolescent.

* * *

We said in one of the sections in the chapter "Sickness and Medicine" that the child is regarded by primitives as a being defenseless up to a certain point, and that for this reason he needs

[87 cont.]

greater protection than the adult as, owing to his limited defensive capacity, illnesses can readily take possession of his body. We made reference in that section to the malevolent action of certain animals as well as the influence of the dead, the contamination exercised by their spirits on conception and on small children. And now we return to refer especially to this last aspect. We also saw how the harmful effects of animals centered especially on unborn infants due to carelessness on the part of pregnant mothers or of the husbands, and this is repeated equally with regard to funerals.

When the grave destined for a dead person is opened, small children who go to the funeral, relatives of the deceased, must pass in file over it with the object that death will be delayed and will not overcome them while very young.

When speaking of sacrifice (cf. Chapter III) as well as when speaking of medicine among the Guajiro Indians in its magic aspect, we quoted the general belief in La Guajira, which is known also as an aspect of folklore in various parts of Colombia, among them Santander and Nariño, that if during pregnancy, the father or the mother of the child to be born has been present at the exhumation of any human remains, the child will be born sickly, will suffer from diarrhea, night sweating, paleness, and loss of weight. The characteristic of something touched by death which the corpse has makes it contagious and, so to speak, contaminates the mother of the infant, who because of his weakness is incapable of resisting its influence. If in this case one considers the folklore aspect, the explanation which is given is that the cold of death has affected the child through the person of its mother or its father in the presence of the corpse. The explanation in the case of Guajiro appears to us to be somewhat more complicated, as we had occasion to show above, although the curing processes tend in reality to extract the cold of death from the body of the child after it is born. The method of curing considered infallible by them is to bury the child in the still warm carcass of an animal sacrificed [88] during a wake, and only when there is no such possibility do they make use of the substitute, the bone, or of burying